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TAMIL VOICE INTERNATIONAL

TVI

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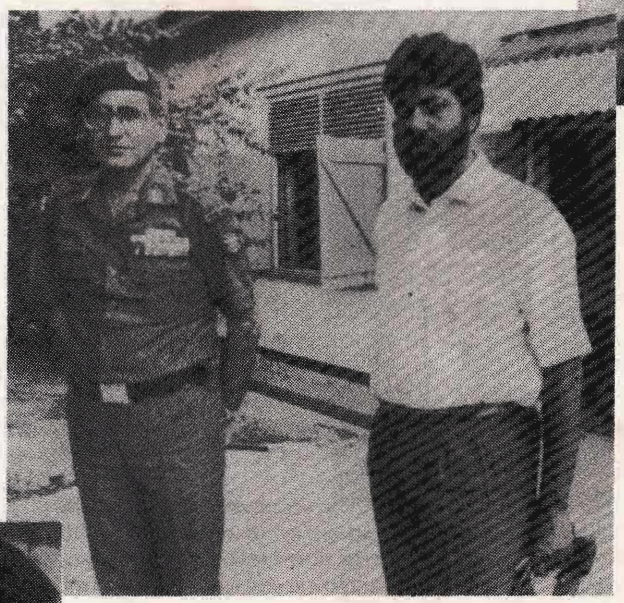
OUR NEW LEADERS

(RAJIV'S GIFT TO TAMIL EELAM)

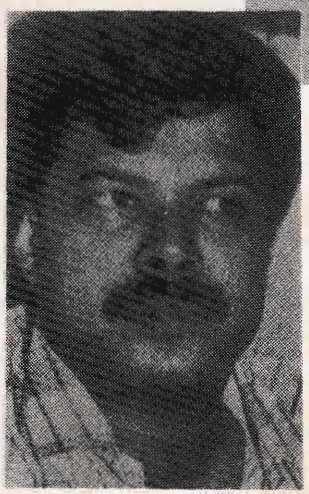
"The people have given their mandate in favour of a Tamilian Government in the north-east. Any delay in giving us power will lead to confrontation."
- A Varadaraja Perumal, Chief-Minister, North-East Provincial Council

Kalkat, who supervised the IPKF's stringent security measures for the polls.



Padmanabha, the mentor of the EPRLF makes no bones about the fact that he and his colleagues depend on the IPKF for survival.

Kalkat with Padmanabha



"To bring back law and order, the EPRLF would form a citizens' voluntary force as a first step essentially to contain unlawful elements. Then we will organise the Tamil police force."

Thambiah alias Shanthan
(Member, EPRLF Central Committee)

See page 18 for media reaction to P C poll in Sri Lanka

YOUR VOICE

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

R Selvam, Kingsbury

News reports from Colombo speak of the JVP leader Rohana Wijeweera being invited to join a caretaker government, on the dissolution of Parliament. To what level discrimination can descend will be evident from a mere comparison between the JVP and the LTTE. The JVP demands to stop violence are dissolution of Parliament, resignation of President JR, abrogation of the Peace Accord, IPKF to quit Sri Lanka, and the formation of a caretaker government. The continuing JVP violence results in 15 to 20 deaths a day on an average, mainly of office-bearers and supporters of the UNP government. And the irony is that the JVP has not been proscribed, and no prize has been announced for the arrest or capture of its leader.

The LTTE, now fighting with its back to the wall because of mighty Indian military pressure, has been clamouring for freedom from injustice, repression, discrimination and atrocities by the majority community government. The LTTE's demands for laying down of arms are to stop colonisation of the N & E with Sinhalese and to revise the 13th Amendment and PC Act to include provisions that satisfy the aspirations of the Eelam Tamils. They offered to accept the Accord under these conditions. They did not refuse to enter the political stream. They did not make any mention of dissolution of Parliament or resignation of the President nor of sending away the IPKF.

Yet the government has placed a One Million Rupee price on the head of Prabaharan, the LTTE leader - for his capture, dead or alive.

Attempts to eradicate the youth movements without resolving their grievances have resulted in this dangerous situation in Sri Lanka. The longer enforcers of bad laws remain in power, the more serious will the problems grow.

NORTH-EAST IS SEPARATE?

S.S.Mohan, Croydon

In an article in the *Lanka Guardian* of Nov.1st captioned "JVP: the 3rd force as the key factor", reference has been made to Mrs.B as saying that her "victory" will be "the victory of all 8-parties and the people of Sri Lanka." Further, the discussions and statements emanating from the various major parties in Sri Lanka appear to have excluded the North and East of Sri Lanka from their purview or area of activities. When discussing the prevalent dangerous situation in Sri Lanka, the situation in the North and East is said to be slowly returning to 'peace and normalcy', and that theirs is a completely different problem. It prompts me to ask whether, in a situation where representative Tamils are excluded from the 8-party alliance or the governing UNP, and other discussions in the South, the outside world is to presume that the North and East, the predominantly Tamil areas of the island, have been left out from the main political stream, for administrative purposes!

ASKING FOR ANOTHER MANDATE ?

V Thangavel, Canada

It is not my wish to join issue with Thuraiyan of Ilford over his rejoinder to my article. I concede that he is one of those Tamils who finds it hard to digest plain truths and raw facts. The plight of the Tamils today is largely due to the shortsightedness and selfishness of our past leaders. Only two leaders stand out. They are Thanthai Chelva and C.Vanniasingham. My friend is a poor defender of Amirthalingam. He is comparing the ex-Chief Justice, a paid public servant of the government of Sri Lanka, with Amirthalingam, a politician and leader of a party with 18 seats in parliament who sought and obtained a mandate to create a sovereign and independent Tamil Eelam by peaceful or other means only to settle for District Councils and now for an ephemeral Provincial Council.

For the enlightenment of Thuraiyan, may I tell him that Amirthalingam himself wanted the Tamils to examine his head if at the next elections he and his party were to come forward and ask for another mandate to create Tamil Eelam. This was exactly what Amirthalingam uttered, gesticulating by placing his fingers on his head to drive home his point, at the 'Elutchi Vizha' held at Ramakrishna Hall, a week after the 1977 July elections. Is it not time we oblige Amirthalingam, especially now that he is demanding the dissolution of Parliament and fresh elections? Is he getting prepared to swear allegiance to the unitary constitution and sit in this parliament, a parliament for all intents and purposes of the Sinhalese for the Sinhalese and by the Sinhalese?

'MEENDUM RAMAYANAM'

Arun, Canada

The drama is the same; only the actors are different. It is "Meendum Ramayanam." These were the thoughts which raced through my mind when I read the news that Indian helicopters ferried Sri Pathmanabha and his lieutenants from Madras to Jaffna (Batticaloa?). Obviously Sri Pathmanabha is playing the role of Vibheedanan who betrayed his brother Ravana to ascend the throne of Lankapuri. Raman rewarded Vibheedanan for his betrayal by crowning the latter king of Lankapuri. Now Rajiv Gandhi has rewarded Pathmanabha for his betrayal by making him the Chief Minister of a glorified Provincial Council! If this was a tragedy, his explanation for contesting the elections borders on comedy. He wants to find out who the Tamils think their true leaders are! I refuse to believe he is so imbecile as not to know the stark truth. Hiding inside bunkers and heavily protected by IPKF guns, artillery and tanks he may soon surface to be crowned the Chief Minister of Northern/Eastern provincial council. At least Vibheedanan's betrayal was understandable compared to the reward he harvested - the crown of Lankapuri. Poor Pathmanabha settles for a powerless and puppet Chief Ministership which at best is a huge joke. Well, if he still insists to know what the Tamils think of him and his followers, he must read the report filed by Bruce Palling from Jaffna by courtesy of *Independent* of Oct.26, 1988, and reproduced in TVI (15.11.88). Now comes the news that EPRLF has banned *Murasoli, Uthayan* and *Virakesari.* That is a very ominous start in a country enjoying 5-star democracy under Pathmanabha's President, J.R. Jayewardene ! One thing is certain - Vibheedanan did not have to follow Raman back to Baratham, but Sri Pathmanabha will have to be ferried back to India, by the same helicopters which brought him, right up to Rajiv's New Delhi, the day IPKF is pushed out of Tamil Eelam.

PRESIDENTIAL AND GENERAL ELECTIONS

President JR has responded to the "4-point Appeal of the Mahanayakes", but only in part. A parliamentary general election has been called for 15 February, 1989. However, the demand of the Mahanayakes for a 'caretaker government' has not been conceded. Apart from the fact that senior Sinhala Buddhist monks can put pressure on an Executive President who, "has dutifully accepted their advice in the manner of an ancient Sinhala monarch" (where do the Tamils and Muslims come in?), there are three factors that make the future uncertain.

Firstly, Mr.Anura Bandaranaike has stated that the dissolution is too late in the day. Behind this statement is the gnawing question as to whether the elections will be free or foul. The past record of the JR government in elections provides the answer.

Secondly, there is a constitutional impasse in the event of a Bandaranaike victory. The outcome will be known on the day after 19 December. But even if Mrs B is the winner, President JR, under the Constitution, vacates office only on 4 February, 1989. Furthermore, under Article 48 of the Constitution, the existing UNP cabinet with Mr Premadasa as Prime Minister must function as the caretaker government till the new Parliament is convened. This means that the present UNP cabinet continues from 19 December (even if Mrs B is elected President) till 15 February, 1989, the day of the parliamentary general elections, and thereafter until the new Parliament is convened. These arrangements provide an enormous advantage to a government which could have lost at the presidential election. It can manipulate the levers of state power. Whether Mrs B can dismiss the caretaker cabinet in the event of her assuming the Presidency on 4 February 1989 is a question that only the Supreme Court can determine. The correct procedure (not necessarily the constitutional) would be for President JR to consult the newly elected President. But he has now the perfect alibi that he bowed to the wishes of the Mahanayakes.

The third factor is the JVP. In its latest pronouncements, the JVP has stated that it is not interested in the electoral process. The JVP is presumably well aware of elections being manipulated to its detriment. Much as the UNP and SLFP like it, the JVP has to-date refrained from choosing the path of Tamil-baiting. It has confined its opposition to "Indian expansionism" and to the 1987 Accord.

There is widespread apprehension among Colombo's staid Sinhala middle-class and upper income groups of the JVP's striking capabilities. A recent issue of *The Far Eastern Economic Review* suggested a UNP-SLFP government to counter JVP-ism. There is even speculation about a UNP-SLFP-JVP national government. The best laid plans of 'prominent prelates' and political brokers can go awry. President JR has a credibility gap and a national government can therefore never emerge. The correspondent of *The Financial Times* has reported that President JR might suspend the Constitution and rule with the armed forces.

There is much that lies concealed in President JR's sphinx-like posture. It is not what will happen before election day on 19 December but what could happen (a) before 4 February 1989 and (b) whether Mrs B, if elected, can maintain stability between 4 February and the convening of the New Parliament. Our view is that there are insurmountable difficulties, given the sharp divisions between the UNP and the SLFP, with the JVP challenging the very foundations of Sinhala class-oriented constitutionalism on which the Sinhala state is anchored.

The hidden agenda of Sri Lanka's future remains to be revealed, if not uncovered. Can President JR hand over power to Mrs B and expect the UNP to politically survive thereafter? If he thinks not, what is to be expected of a man who feels his Party will not be safe? There is much that can happen before power is transferred on 4 February 1989 in the event of a Bandaranaike victory. What will the UNP itself do when the lives of several thousands of its supporters are at

continued on page 4

TAMIL VOICE International

எப்பொருள் யார்யார்வாய்க் கேட்பினும் அப்பொருள் மெய்ப்பொருள் காண்ப தறிவு.

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Material sent for publication may be abridged and edited if found necessary.

WAS IT AN ELECTION IN TAMIL EELAM ?

Maaveeran P Nedumaran

The governments of India and Sri Lanka decided to conduct the Provincial Council elections in the North and East hook or by crook.

The modus operandi for this was devised about three months ahead of the elections. Speaking at a party meeting convened on the 21st August, Mr Jayewardene spoke in the following tenor: *Details of the merger of the North and the East will be published. Thereafter provincial council elections will be held at any cost. The Indian army will assist the Sinhalese army and the Sinhalese police to conduct the provincial council elections.* Mr Jayewardena has endorsed the view of Sirimavo Bandaranaike that the election scheduled for Dec. 19, should be held under the supervision of observers from Commonwealth nations to avoid electoral frauds.

But strangely enough, journalists were not permitted into the Tamil areas on the day of the election. Three journalists selected by the Indian government were taken to three selected areas on the election day. Those favoured journalists themselves have unwittingly leaked some vital information. They have quite naively revealed that though there were people in the booths, they could not see people going to and from the booths.

The fact of the matter is that, on the election day, the three areas to which the journalists were taken were cordoned off, the residents ordered to come out for inspection, bundled into trucks and rushed to polling booths.

On the day appointed for the submission of nominations for provincial council election in the Northern Province, no one was allowed to go near the office of the Election Officer. Only the EPRLF candidates were taken in with armed security to file their nomination papers. Because the Indian army felt that the conduct of the election in the North would be a Herculean task, it chose to allow only the EPRLF to file nomination papers.

The electoral registers were incomplete and the local government authorities refused to distribute identity cards to the voters. Consequently all identity cards were given to the EPRLF. Only those to whom the identity cards were issued by the EPRLF could vote at the election. As a consequence, irregularites such as impersonation and plural voting went on non-stop.

It is customary to have at least 2 or 3 officers in each polling booth. But the Sri Lankan government sent only one official for each booth. As that single official himself was a Sinhalese he did not intervene. As agents of the candidates there were EPRLF men in every polling booth. It is these agents who marked the polling cards. The *Indian Express* has highlighted these irregularities during the election. The reporters of the *Indian Express* and the *Hindu* have lent support to the allegation that the supporters of the EPRLF were patrolling the streets on that day brandishing rifles and guns.

It has been reported that about 53% of the total voters registered their votes. That is, 150,000 people cast their votes. In Batticaloa there should have been 163 polling booths. But, there were only 77 booths. Every voter has to put 3 marks on a ballot paper. The voting is said to have taken place between 7 am and 4 pm. i.e. for 9 hours. On an average at least 2,000 people should have voted at every booth. This means that four people should have voted every minute, on the average. According to press reports, voting had been dull and slow in the morning. If that be true, then in the evening the voting rate must have been 7 or 8 per minute. This figure sounds stupendous and does not stand to reason.

More than 100 thousand refugees of East origin have not yet returned to their homes in the East. They are still eking out an existence in the refugee camps of India and Sri Lanka. The Indian government had announced that facilities would be made for those in the camps to register their votes. But no such facilities were made for them to signify their wish. But the votes of those refugees have been somehow cast.

Because Indian government colluded with and connived at the electoral irregularities and political improprieties engineered and executed by the Sri Lankan government, an indelible blotch on the face of India has been painted.

* * * *

PRESIDENTIAL AND GENERAL ELECTIONS

continued from page 3

stake? One pointer is towards a martial law administration. The military has already increased its visibility by appearing on television and declaring that it will implement the government's draconian directives which include shooting to kill and disposing of bodies without a judicial inquest. Will the JVP accept the verdict of the electorate and reconcile itself to the constitutional order? Or will it continue to confront the rulers until power ultimately is seized by Mr Rohana Wijeweera?

What of India? The intervention in the Maldives is an indicator. But can India succeed in the Sri Lanka situation? The odds are against. Which takes us back to a proposition we made in an earlier editorial. India is left with no alternative but to protect her southern flank. This, India can do only by a Cyprus-style operation. But to effect this with political judgement, the policy-makers of New Delhi will have to undertake the task themselves and not depend on RAW agents.

"We are proud of who we are,
We are proud of what we do,
We are proud of our families and community",
We are proud of our history."

- (Nick Patsaouras, California Democratic Campaign Finance Chairman, in a fund-raising speech on behalf of Michael Dukakis)

"There is no easy walk to Freedom anywhere, and many of us will have to pass through the valley of the shadow of death again and again before we reach the mountain top of our desires"

Joseph Nehru

FORTNIGHTLY FORUM

THE WORM THAT TURNED

Once upon a time there was a group of Tamils which was committed to violent revolution and the creation of a separate state called Eelam for the Tamil people. The name of this group was the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front - the EPRLF. The EPRLF engaged in guerilla warfare not only against their oppressors, the Sri Lankan army, but also against another group of Tamils known as the LTTE. The LTTE was very popular among the Tamil people and the EPRLF was jealous of this mass support. Then one day, the Sri Lankan government signed an accord with the big power in the region, India, whereby a peace keeping force was to be sent to protect the Tamil people. Most of the Tamil people were overjoyed as they had always looked on Mother India as their protector. But things turned out nasty. The Indian troops known as the IPKF committed terrible deeds against the Tamil people, and forced the LTTE into a position of having to fight this army of occupation.

The EPRLF cadres saw the chance to get back at the LTTE, and at the same time to satisfy their thirst for power; they turned into quislings. In collusion with the IPKF, they went on a rampage of killing. All those who dared to voice their reservations of the accord, to speak out against the army of occupation, or lend their support to the LTTE were systematically annihilated. In return, the IPKF guaranteed the EPRLF the political power that it so craved by guaranteeing it control of the provincial council that had been set up as part of the accord. When the elections for this council were held in the east, because in the north they were "uncontested", they proved to be a farce with every rule in the book broken. One official from Colombo who went to vote found that he had already voted! In a polling centre with 900 voters, 1300 ballot papers were recorded. Little wonder that the reported 62.8 per cent voter turn-out astonished even the most ardent accord supporters.

Yet, a central committee member of the EPRLF, Shanthan told the foreign media: "To see all those people patiently waiting to vote, knowing that they supported us, was really very moving." Only the crocodile tears were missing.

Undaunted the EPRLF has chosen to run the north and east with the blessing of Colombo and Delhi. According to news reports Varatharaja Perumal is Chief Minister and Trincomalee has been named the regional capital. A cut off date is to be established for "legitimate" migration, and anyone who comes to the area after that date will allegedly have to leave. Thus the party of violent revolution has now become the devotee of devolutionary politics *a la* India.

EVERY DOG HAS ITS DAY

There was a time when some Sinhalese people said that there were no genuine Tamil refugees and that the stories of massacres were a fabrication by Tamils wanting to live overseas. How the times have changed. British and other Western Embassies in Colombo report that they have been flooded with visa applications from wealthy Sinhalese seeking to leave the country in the wake of the JVP reign of terror. The daily bloodletting in the Sinhala community is a matter of routine to the extent that it no longer makes the headlines in the local papers. The JVP appears to have changed the focus of its campaign, at least temporarily, from politicians to the news media. Several local journalists received death threats and a provincial reporter was murdered in mid-November.

Sinhalese in the south have complained that they are effectively under three governments: the JVP, the armed forces, and the official civil administration. The army has formed its own death squads, and its soldiers man buses and trains. According to the Sunday Times, "only a rash person here and increasingly in Colombo dares take a decision without the JVP's approval."

GREEN TIGERS THAT STALK

The Colombo District Citizens' Committee established last month has been inundated with horror stories. It has compiled a list of nearly 100 names of people shot, tortured, beaten or arrested, with most accounts backed by affadavits from relatives and other witnesses. Though some of the murders have been committed by criminals and the JVP, the committee insists that most deaths are the work of soldiers, police, Special Task paramilitary units or the so-called Green Tigers, a name given to any supporter of the UNP.

The committee's Treasurer said: "We condemn all killings, no matter who does them. But our point is that the JVP killings are heavily publicised, while these state killings are not. And if the state descends to the level of the subversives, something is really wrong." So far this year lawyers have lodged 460 *habeas corpus* applications which in effect accuse the authorities of responsibility for missing persons. Significantly only one of these cases involves a disappearance in a Tamil area.

The establishment of a citizens' committee in the south of Sri Lanka carries an uncanny echo of similar groups in the north and east which for years complained of atrocities. As *The Guardian* put it: "The grisly descriptions are identical. Overnight cordon and search operations, youths taken away never to reappear, mutilated bodies dumped in rivers, and corpses burned on pyres of vehicle tyres."

Four Mahanayake Theros have been prompted by events to call on persons and organisations who have taken up arms to stop all killings and accept the right of others to live in the country. They said: "We as religious leaders express our deep sorrow that a society which has nurtured for the past 2300 years under the influence of Buddhism and the preachings of the Mahasangha has resorted to such brutality." To which one can only add "Amen."

Thirukkural

S.Sriskandarajah

கொல்லா நலத்தது நோன்மை பிறர்தீமை
சொல்லா நலத்தது சால்பு.

"Kollaa Nalaththathu Noanmai Pirar Theemai
Sollaa Nalaththathu Saalpu" - **Transliteration (984)**
Penance consists in the goodness that kills not,
and perfection in the goodness that tells not others' faults - **Translation.**

One may not be happy with the rendition of this Kural. Certain concepts in the Tamil language are such that the words conveying such concepts defy all efforts to translate them into another tongue. Perhaps it is true with many other languages too. It is perhaps this practical difficulty that had forced the English language to bodily incorporate thousands of Latin words connoting legal concepts.

The word ***Saalpu*** in the Tamil language embodies in itself a variety of subtle and noble qualities that an exact equivalent in the English language cannot be found. The word "perfection" is a far cry from what the Tamil word "Saalpu" pregnantly means. Still, we have used that word as the English equivalent for want of a better term.

The Kural under consideration is to be found in the Chapter on ***Saantraanmai*** (Perfection). 'Saantraanmai' means the quality of possessing and maintaining a combination of many lovable and affable qualities. Many noble qualities are necessary to make up a perfect man. But, according to Valluvar, two great qualities are essential if one were to be deemed perfect. It is these two qualities that the Kural we are dealing with is speaking about.

One such quality is the abstinence from killing while the other is the refraining from speaking of the faults and defects of others. According to Thiruvalluvar these qualities are core qualities, indispensable for a perfect person.

If one analyses this Kural, one will find that Thiruvalluvar requires a perfect being to be kind in deed and word. He wants the perfect one to be kind by not killing and to be kind by not 'speaking ill' of the faults or shortcomings of others. It is idle to compare the two qualities spoken of in this Kural and to state as to which is nobler than the other, because they are of equal importance and nobility. Still, if one were to make an assessment based on the words employed to describe the two qualities one may be inclined to think that Thiruvalluvar gives greater importance to the quality of abstaining from backbiting. In other words it may be correct to say that Thiruvalluvar is of the view that abstinence from backbiting is a greater virtue than the abstinence from killing. Not only does he say that abstinence from backbiting is a nobler virtue, but also implies that it is a more difficult virtue.

How, one may ask. A person who wants to kill may refrain from killing out of sheer helplessness as, for example, if he couldn't find the instrument or weapon necessary for the killing. The instrument necessary for backbiting is the tongue; and the tongue is always there and he can twist it any time and anyhow and therefore there is every chance of his giving vent to his feelings and emotions without let or hindrance. Therefore, the question of helplessness does not arise in the case of a person who wants to burn another with words. If such a person restrains himself, then it is obviously a great quality. This, then, is the reason why we said earlier that the restraint of the tongue is a greater virtue in the view of Thiruvalluvar.

There is another Kural which lends support to our view that abstinence from backbiting is a nobler quality. Let us transliterate that Kural: *Aram Kooraan Alla Seyinum Oruvan Puram Kooraan Entral Inithu (Kural 181).* This is what it says:- Though one speaks no words of virtue and does only ill-deeds, yet to be praised that he does not backbite is great indeed. So great is the virtue of avoiding backbiting that Thiruvalluvar states that non-backbiting is a far greater virtue than many of the other virtues he has himself exhorted us to develop and practise.

For many of us backbiting is a great national pastime. Nothing pleases us more than gossiping and we always find time for it. Gossiping is nothing but backbiting. It is a game which we play effortlessly and with gusto. But that is the game that causes great harm to those that are away from the scene and that is the one which Thiruvalluvar despises most.

If we pause for a second and cogitate over it we will never fail to realise the stark truth that it is the most venomous of vices. It is no wonder that Thiruvalluvar exalts the person who is free from such vice as the most virtuous and perfect.

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Ask Rani

RANI'S POLITICS

Dear Rani,

After reading 'Ask Rani' in the last two issues, I feel that questions of a personal nature do not belong in a political publication. If there are to be questions and answers they should pertain to the political situation alone. Do you agree? ***Rajan, Ealing, UK***

Reply:

It is not for me to agree or disagree. The 'Ask Rani' page was started in response to requests from readers who wanted matters other than those that are directly political to be discussed in TVI. In any case, I would take the view that issues such as racism and sexism are political. However, if other readers take the same view as yourself, they should by all means write and say so, as did a reader whose letter was published in the last issue. We are here to serve our readers, and it is your wishes that are paramount. Anyway, read on.

SUPERPOWER STATUS

Dear Rani,

Can you deny that India had ulterior motives in signing the Accord with Sri Lanka in July 1987 ? It swarmed its troops into Jaffna within an hour of signing the Accord, and has recently posted some of its military personnel in Colombo apparently to "safeguard the Government in power from the southern 'subversives'." Every move of India points to its geo-political designs and its ambition to become a regional superpower. ***Chandran, Croydon, UK***

Reply:

Alas, I am not in a position to either confirm or deny India's designs, ulterior or otherwise. There is little doubt, however, that India wishes to be regarded as the regional superpower. You may be interested to know that the idea of a 'Superpower' was developed in 1944 by an American, Professor WTR Fox, based on the ability of a state to "deploy preponderant power" wherever it was needed. Initially he identified the Soviet Union, United States and Britain as superpowers, but Britain's loss of its former status and the inability to hold on to its colonies, reduced the number to two. In regional terms, India has chosen to deploy preponderant power so that it can act in any part of the region. In this sense, India exercises hegemony by its readiness to violate, though importantly not to disregard, the rights of sovereignty, equality and independence enjoyed by the lesser states. In other words, India recognises that these rights exist, but justifies violation of them by appeal to some specific over-riding principle. As Georg Schwarzenberger writing on "Hegemonial Intervention" in 1959 noted: "hegemony is imperialism with good manners."

Space does not permit expansion of this theme, but I refer you to Professor Wilson's article, India's influence as major regional power and the reason for the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord *in TVI.10 which answers your question in more detail. As an observation, I would add that the term 'geo-political' is used rather liberally in discussions surrounding India's role in the region. I would have thought 'geo-strategic' the more appropriate term, though the use of either seems unnecessary.*

LEGAL ENTRY

Dear Rani,

I am studying law at a Polytechnic. My parents want me to become a barrister, but I have heard that as an Asian woman I will have difficulty pursuing my career. Could you please advise me if this is true?

Sanjani, Bristol, UK

Reply:

My friends in the Bar, whom I consulted, inform me that the opportunities for women and ethnic minority groups have improved remarkably in recent times. Last year, for instance, 60 per cent of applicants for pupillage (which as you probably know is the required apprenticeship to a practising barrister after admission to the Bar) from Grays Inn were women. There are similar trends in other Inns as well where women account for around 58 per cent. I do not have figures for Asian students, but I am told that neither your sex nor your ethnic origin should prove too much of a barrier.

THOU SHALT NOT KILL

Dear Rani,

In your reply to a letter on vegetarianism in the last issue (TVI.22), you say that you stopped eating meat because you do not believe in bloodshed. But surely, human blood is more important than animal or fish blood. So what do you have to say about the blood shed in the fighting for the liberation of our people. Is that not even worse than eating meat? ***S.Sebaratnam, Surrey, UK***

Reply:

Every major religion holds that kill ing is wrong. I would therefore say that any act of killing, however justified, is a repudiation of that precept. In Thirukkural, Thiruvalluvar says, "Let no one do that which would destroy the life of another even though he should lose his own life." (See TVI.10) At the same time, he advocated that "anti- social elements should be mercilessly removed if they are proved to be inimical to the well-being of society as a whole." I would take issue with this utilitarian approach on the grounds that the decision on what comprises anti-social elements is arbitrary. Nazism used similar lines to justify the mass murder of communists, Jews, homosexuals, and the physically and mentally disabled. On the other hand, the killing in the course of liberation may be construed as an act of self-defence though such an interpretation would run into legal difficulties. Then there is the theory of just war which effectively condones killing so long as it is within certain rules. And, of course, the military is based on the notion of defence of a state. In the absence of a definitive position, I would iterate the sentiments expressed in TVI.10: "Can a human being kill another, even if law and circumstances demand it?" In the final analysis, it is a question that each individual has to answer for her or himself.

SRI LANKA - ANOTHER CYPRUS ?

By Sundari

Too often, parallels are drawn between conflicts in one state with those happening in another. Taken to their logical extreme, Nicaragua thus becomes Vietnam, Afghanistan becomes Czechoslovakia, Northern Ireland becomes South Africa, and so on. Comparisons are valid to a certain extent, particularly when used to illustrate a point. Taken beyond that, however, they become glib, and at times dangerous. In short, analogy is not analysis.

It is in this context that Mr Amirthalingam's prognosis that Sri Lanka will in all likelihood become a "Cyprus-type situation" (TVI.22) needs to be considered. What follows then is a potted history of Cyprus so that readers can judge for themselves the wisdom or otherwise of the Cyprus analogy.

Cyprus, after three centuries of Ottoman Turkish rule, was occupied by Britain in 1878, annexed in 1914, and formally declared a Crown Colony in 1925. During the period of British rule the dominant issue was the relationship between the Greek Cypriot majority - 75 per cent in 1886, 80 per cent in 1983 - and the Turkish Cypriot minority which formed the remainder of the population.

The conflict between the two groups remains now, as then, a reflection of the hostility that usually exists between Greece and Turkey. The Turkish Cypriots felt dominated by the Greek Cypriots who in turn regarded themselves threatened by the island's close proximity to Turkey, and the distance from Greece. The Greek-speaking community is overwhelmingly Christian; almost all Greek Cypriots adhere to the orthodox Church. Most Turkish speakers by comparison are Muslims. Both communities sought to alleviate their fears by reunion with their respective 'motherlands': the Greeks by *enosis,* that is union with Greece; and the Turks by *taxim,* that is partition, as a first step towards rejoining Turkey.

The Greek Cypriots seeking *enosis* staged a guerilla war against British rule between 1955 and 1959. Their movement, known as EOKA (National Organisation of Cypriot Combatants) was led politically by Archbishop Makarios, the head of the Orthodox Church in Cyprus, and militarily by General George Grivas. The British, using the familiar divide-and-rule tactics, went to the extent of employing Turkish Cypriot police against EOKA. In 1956, Makarios and three other leaders of the *enosis* movement were deported. Three years later, after a compromise agreement between the Greek and Turkish communities, a constitution for an independent Cyprus was finalised, and Cyprus became independent in 1960 with Archbishop Makarios as its first President.

The British left behind a constitution designed to allay Turkish Cypriot fears. An attempt by the Greek Cypriots to rewrite the constitution in 1963, however, provoked bloody intercommunal riots, necessitating the presence of a UN peace-keeping force in 1964 to keep the two communities apart, and effectively dividing the island into two armed camps. The exclusion of the Turkish community from political power led to the creation of separate judicial and legislative organs for the Turkish community. Relations with the Greek Cypriots gradually improved and in 1968 talks began on the establishment of a more equitable constitutional arrangement. The fighting stopped, but the fears and the dormant hostility remained, occasionally reawoken by violent clashes.

The talks continued sporadically for six years ending in deadlock and mutual recriminations, with no agreement in sight. The Turks favoured some sort of federation, while the Greeks advocated a unitary state. Each community received military aid from its mother country, and the Greek Cypriot National Guard was controlled by officers of the Greek Army. In 1971 General Grivas returned to Cyprus, allegedly supported by the junta regime in Athens, to instigate a fresh attempt by EOKA to bring about *enosis.* The campaign was directed against Makarios who, on the death of Grivas in January 1974, ordered a purge of EOKA sympathisers from the police, National Guard and civil service, accusing the Greek government of subversion. Makarios was deposed by a military coup on 15 July and fled to Britain. In his place Nicos Sampson, a former EOKA gunman and extremist Greek Cypriot politician, was appointed President.

At the invitation of Rauf Denktas, the Turkish Cypriot leader, the Turkish army intervened to protect the Turkish community and to prevent Greece from using its control of the National Guard to take over Cyprus. Turkish troops landed on 20 July and rapidly occupied the northern third of the island, dividing the country along what became the Attila Line. President Sampson resigned on 23 July, the same day as the military regime in Athens collapsed. A UN ceasefire held for almost a month, but the Greek Cypriots could not make the concessions demanded by the Turks, and on 14 August the Turkish Army advanced to a new

Attila Line, occupying, in the process, 37 per cent of the island. A large transfer of population followed, as 180,000 Greek Cypriots and 100,000 Turkish Cypriots crossed the line into their respective zones of security.

Archbishop Makarios returned to Cyprus in December and resumed the presidency. The Turkish Cypriots' effective control of northern Cyprus, however, enabled them to establish a *de facto* government, and to declare in February 1975 the establishment of the "Turkish Federated State of Cyprus" (TFSC), with Denktas as President. This move was regarded by the Turkish Cypriots as a first step towards either a federal bizonal state or independence. The Greek Cypriots for their part demanded a redrawing of the Attila Line more in keeping with the population ratio.

In September 1980, the intermittent UN-sponsored intercommunal peace talks were resumed. The following year the Turkish Cypriots offered to hand over three to four per cent of the area they controlled and to resettle 40,000 of the refugees who had fled from the north in 1974. The constitutional issue remained the main problem. The Turkish Cypriots want equal status for the two communities with equal representation in government and strong links with the mother country. The Greeks agree to the principle of an alternating presidency, but object to any disproportionate representation for the Turkish community, and favour a strong central government. In November 1981, a UN plan involving a federal council, an alternating presidency, and the allocation of 30 per cent of the island to the Turkish community was presented, but the talks faltered when Greek Prime Minister, Andreas Papandreou, called for the withdrawal of all Greek and Turkish troops, and the holding of an international conference rather than the continuation of intercommunal talks.

Then, in May 1983, the UN General Assembly voted in favour of the withdrawal of Turkish troops from Cyprus whereupon President Denktas threatened to boycott any further intercommunal talks and seek recognition of the TFSC as a sovereign state. UN proposals for a summit meeting between Denktas and Spyros Kyprianou, who had succeeded Makarios on his death in 1977, were unsuccessful. On 15 November, the TFSC made a unilateral declaration of independence as the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" (TRNC) with Denktas continuing as President. Like the TFSC, the TRNC was recognised only by Turkey, and the declaration of independence was condemned by the UN Security Council.

Since that time not much has changed. Each community continues to adminster its own affairs with a president, council of ministers, legislature and judicial system, refusing to recognise the authority of the other's government. The Greek Cypriot administration claims to be the government of all Cyprus, and is generally recognised as such, although it has no Turkish participation. Any agreement to break the deadlock over Cyprus would need the support of both communities and both motherlands.

Under a procedure adopted in Geneva last August, George Vassiliou who replaced Kyprianou as the Greek Cypriot President and Denktas, undertook to attempt by 1 June 1989 to agree on a federal solution. They have been holding talks in Nicosia since December, and last met in New York with the UN Secretary-General in November of this year. Before the New York meeting Denktas said: "Let no one think that in New York we are going to perform the funeral rites of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus." Vassilou meanwhile complained of his frustration: "I can talk to Denktas, but he doesn't listen."

The Greek Cypriot side continues to argue for an integrated type of federation, while the Turkish Cypriots demand a stricter division, meaning virtually two separate states, where their security as a minority is guaranteed by Turkey's right to intervene militarily should trouble arise. Given Cyprus' long history of miscarried negotiations the question is whether the talks can overcome the range of intercommunal issues blocking agreement on some form of bizonal federation for the island. With time solidifying the line between the two communities it may well prove that a permanent international border has indeed emerged on Cyprus.

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MASS ESCAPE FROM COLOMBO'S JAILS

The Sri Lankan Government suffered a serious setback in its efforts to contain the JVP last night when the organisation freed more than 200 prisoners in dramatic breakouts at the country's two main prisons.

Most of the escapers, from the neighbouring Welikada and Magazine prisons in Colombo were said to be hardcore JVP members. Welikada is a maximum-security gaol with more than 5,000 inmates. This is where, in 1983, 52 Tamil political prisoners and detainees were butchered in cold blood by the security forces.

In what was described as an "inside job", which implied a major lapse in security, inmates at Welikada blew a hole in the perimeter wall last night with a huge bomb. They were aided by JVP supporters waiting outside. Guards and sentries were attacked with grenades and gunfire. The prisoners from both gaols escaped either on foot or in a number of vehicles, including a single-decker bus. Residents in the area said they heard intense gunfire for two hours and that both prisons were on fire at one stage.

One police report said that 228 inmates had broken out of the Magazine prison. Four people were reported to have been shot dead. The area was sealed off by troops while order was restored.

Later, the security forces were said to be in hot pursuit of the fugitives, some of whom were heading north out of Colombo. A number were said to have been recaptured.

JVP members have staged several breakouts from prisons and detention camps in recent weeks, but this is by far the biggest and most dramatic escape to-date.

The news of the great escape will only serve to heighten the tension that has been building in the run-up to the presidential election. The JVP has already shown signs of stepping up its campaign of sabotage, strikes and killings.

REPLACEMENT OF THE IPKF

Dr.Brian Senewiratne, Australia

In a recent press release, the LTTE asked for the replacement of the Indian Peace Keeping Force by an International Peace Keeping Force. This is not only imperative but urgent. A month prior to this press release I made this very same suggestion at the 4th Tamil Eelam Convention in New York.

Rajiv Gandhi's ill-advised military adventure has not only created chaos in Sri Lanka but has also done serious damage to the image of India. There were three disastrous mistakes made by the politically immature and rash Indian Prime Minister and his advisers.

Some of the jawans forming the Indian peace-keeping force in Jaffna

The first mistake was to enter into negotiations with a regime in Colombo that had no credibility among the Sinhalese people and even less among the Tamils. Here was a repressive, corrupt and dubiously legal regime that had violated the Constitution of Sri Lanka, that had cancelled elections, that had used government-sponsored violence to intimidate voters in a referendum to extend its life in office and had removed the Tamil Opposition from Parliament. What is amazing is that India thought it fit to enter into negotiations with such a regime. As Professor Archie Singham put it, it is difficult to understand "what the Indian government is doing in bed with such a regime."

The second mistake was to send in the Indian Army, and the third, and perhaps the most serious mistake, to allow a "Peace-Keeping Force" to be misused and turned into a "Disarming Force." There are those who claim that India had no option but to move in her troops because of the threat to her security caused by President Jayewardene inviting countries hostile to India to get militarily involved in Sri Lanka. The first important point to appreciate is that this did not happen overnight. It was the result of a deliberate and well-formulated programme executed over several years by Jayewardene, calculated to goad India. The British ex-SAS, the Israeli Mossad, and the Pakistanis were invited in, with open arms to help in the training of the Sri Lankan army; naval facilities in the Trincomalee harbour were given to a dubious consortium that serviced the American 6th fleet; and a large area north of Colombo was given to the Americans ostensibly for broadcasting but with facilities for monitoring submarine movements in the Indian ocean at a time when India was about to lease a nuclear-powered submarine. If India was concerned about her security, why was no objection voiced in clear, unambiguous terms, to the Sri Lankan government, that India would not tolerate such intrusion into her "area of influence"?

Secondly, if Rajiv Gandhi was "asleep" while all this was happening, he should have acted against the Jayewardene government, not against the Tamil militants. It was after all the Sri Lankan government that invited the hostile forces into Sri Lanka.

Even as late as 1987, there were still options available. I have completely reliable information that early in 1987, Jayewardene, realising that the situation in the Tamil areas was getting beyond his control, privately contacted a senior official at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London asking for a Commonwealth Peace-Keeping Force. This request was turned down by Britain and India - presumably because India had "other plans." To say that India had no option but to move in the Indian Army is untenable.

Even after having committed this major blunder, less damage would have been done had the Indian Prime Minister told President Jayewardene, that his "Peace-Keeping Force" would be a peace keeping force and would not be turned into a "Disarming Force." There is a clear United Nations understanding of what a Peace Keeping Force does. It stands between two (or more) contending parties - which in the Sri Lankan situation were the Sri Lankan army and the Tamil militants. Disarming the militants and hunting them out is not the function of a Peace-Keeping Force.

THE EFFECTS

The results of this "misadventure" have been serious. Thousands of Tamil civilians have been killed in the process of hunting out the Tigers. One single operation alone in October 1987 in Jaffna has antagonised the very people whose support was essential if the Indian mission was to have had the remotest chance of success.

The effects in the Sinhalese areas have been equally disastrous. Sinhalese paranoia of India taking over Sri Lanka, however imaginary , are very real in an ethnic group brought up on history books which portray the Indians as "foreign invaders." The violent reaction in the South even before the Accord was signed was a clear signal of what was in store.

As far as effects on India are concerned, 100,000 soldiers of the fourth largest army in the world suffering thousands of casualties at the hands of a few thousand sarong-clad boys must generate joy, if not ridicule, in the hearts of Pakistanis, Chinese and others who have been threatened by India.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE ?

As to who was responsible on the Sri Lankan side, is all too obvious. What merits consideration is the responsibility for the Indian mistake. Even Rajiv Gandhi's most ardent supporters must admit that he was ill-equipped to be the Prime Minister of a major country with one of the most complex political systems in the world. To quote Dr.Subramaniam Swamy, MP, and a leader of the Janatha Party: "My understanding of him is that since he is not educated beyond school and has no sense of history, it is a fact that he is a singularly ignorant person. Therefore, when he is seated before four people and they give him four different advice, he does not know which one to pick. The army will give him one advice. RAW will give him another advice, the Ministry of External Affairs will give him another advice, the Opposition parties will give him one more advice, the intellectuals whom he sometimes invites for breakfast will give him yet another advice, and his wife Sonia Gandhi also sometimes gives him some advice. He does not know what to do and he therefore fluctuates going from one extreme to another." Into the vacuum produced by Gandhi's inexperience stepped in the Indian bureaucrats who must primarily be held responsible.

WILL THE IPKF PULL OUT ?

This will depend on the various forces operating in Sri Lanka and in India both for and against the IPKF presence. In the North, no one, except perhaps the Tamil quislings armed and sustained by India to wipe out the LTTE, wants the IPKF to stay. In the Sri Lankan South, no one perhaps with the exception of Jayewardene and Gamini Dissanayake, want the IPKF on Sri Lankan soil. I have reliable information that Rajiv Gandhi feels that neither Jayewardene nor his successor will dare to ask him to withdraw the IPKF. This is likely to be another serious miscalculation. Neither Premadasa nor Mrs.Bandaranaike can survive politically, or perhaps even physically, if they agree to the IPKF remaining in Sri Lanka.

In India, the reactions to the IPKF being in Sri Lanka are mixed. The Army totally opposes withdrawal on the grounds that the prestige of the 4th largest army is at stake and that the Tigers be eliminated. RAW takes an opposing view and is against the presence of the IPKF in Sri Lanka. It feels that by being able to move around freely, more can be done without the IPKF.

The Ministry of External Affairs takes the view that India is a major regional power and, as such, could and should intervene militarily in neighbouring countries that are unstable. It is in favour of the IPKF remaining in Sri Lanka permanently, and therefore totally opposed to the liquidation of the Tigers for fear that it might result in the IPKF being asked to leave. The opposition centrist parties such as the Telugu Desam, Congress S, Jan Morche and Lok Dal B, who are critical of India pursuing a military solution, are for an immediate pull out of the IPKF. The general public sentiment is that if the IPKF are not welcome in Sri Lanka they should leave and not remain there to do Jayewardene's dirty work.

With these various forces operating and a constantly changing situation, it is difficult to forecast whether or not the IPKF will remain in Sri Lanka.

WHAT IF THEY LEAVE ?

The Tamil militants, weakened by the Indian army, may not be in a position to protect the vulnerable people in the North and East from Sinhalese hoodlums and the Sri Lankan army. It is in this context that there must be an International Peace Keeping Force, at least in the wings, to take over if the IPKF is suddenly withdrawn. There is one more problem about an IPKF pull-out, possibly more horrendous than any other. It is the possibility that the IPKF will leave with its arms in the hands of stooges in the Tamil areas. An IPKF pull out must hence be supervised - to see that it leaves with weapons intact.

THE INTERNATIONAL PEACE-KEEPING FORCE

Ideally this should not be made up of troops from any country that has been involved on either side of the conflict (India, Pakistan, Israel, Britain, US, Singapore etc). What is equally important is that it should be a Peace-keeping force and not allow itself to become a "Disarming" or any other type of Force. It must stand between the two fighting forces - the militant Tamils and the Sri Lankan forces - and restore some degree of peace and normalcy. The most urgent need in Sri Lanka today is to pursue peace which is even more urgent than pursuing a solution to the conflict.

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NO TO GURKHA AID

President Jayewardene said recently that the Government would, if necessary, call on foreign military help to assist it in defeating the JVP.

He confirmed that the Government had already asked Britain to send Gurkha troops from Hong Kong but said the project had now been dropped. It is understood that the request was made recently but that Britain gave a polite refusal. Mr.Jayewardene said the Gurkha troops would have been used for "static" duties such as defending vital installations. The President's remarks came after a night on which 55 people were reported to have been killed in the south of the country by JVP the highest toll in a 24-hour period since the violence began.

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THREAT OF ELECTION ANARCHY

Amid an increasingly violent and unstable environment, there are rumours of a last-minute postponement of the poll. Most independent observers and Western diplomatic analysts agree the chances for a genuine exercise in democracy are slim. The turnout is expected to be low, with many voters opting to stay away from polling stations because of death threats from the JVP and counter-threats from paramilitary organisations, acting in concert with the security forces. In all areas, and particularly in the violent south, the electoral machinery has virtually disintegrated, with local government agents and civil servants responsible for polling either refusing to turn up for work or going into hiding. The dwindling public confidence in the chances for democracy were summed up in a statement by a non-political group of 30 human rights and citizens' committees, the United Organisation for Peace and Democracy based in Colombo. It described Sri Lanka as "descending into anarchy" with "virtual military rule" only a few days before polling. It said hundreds of youths were being killed by the security forces and by what it described as paramilitary forces. "In such a situation", the group warned, "it would be extremely unrealistic to expect any form of democratic election. The results of such an election held under military conditions would be without legitimacy and acceptance by the mass of the people."

THE BRUTAL MURDER OF SIVANANDASUNDARAM; WAS IT PRE-PLANNED?

Mr.K.Sivanandasundaram, President of the Tamil Eelam People's Forum, Jaffna, was assassinated on Friday, Oct.21, 1988.

BACKGROUND

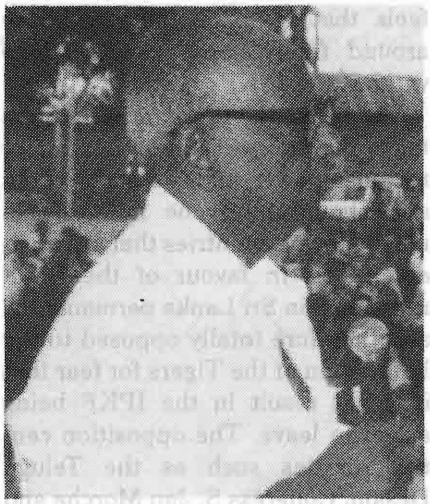
Mr.Sivanandasundaram, 66 years old at the time of death, started life in Ceylon Govt. service in 1941. While in service he took an active interest in Trade Union activities, first in the GCSU and later in the *Arasaanka Eluthuvinajnar Sangam* as its President. He retired in 1963 to take up appointment as Administrative Secretary of the Federal Party. After working for a few years in that capacity he resigned; and, with other prominent Tamils, founded the *Thamilar Suyaadchi Kalagam* (Tamil Self-rule Party). He was a member of the editorial board of a newspaper *Viduthalai* published by this Kalagam. In 1987, he was one of the nominees for the post of Chief Administrator of the Interim Administration Council which was to have been set up under the Indo-Sri Lankan Peace Accord.

The Tamil Eelam People's Forum was founded in February 1988, and as its President he attended a number of meetings called by the IPKF between June 28 and Sept.16, 1988, and, along with other Forum members, he had discussions with the Indian High Commissioner on Sept. 17, 1988. At all these meetings he espoused the cause of the Tamil people by pointing out the drawbacks in the Peace Accord and the wrong approach adopted by the Indian Government. He recently played a major role in the publication of the booklet "The Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka" which highlighted the deficiencies in the Peace Accord and the 13th Amendment to the Constitution.

He has also addressed several public meetings explaining to the people the reasons why the Tamil people should reject the constitutional arrangement and the devolution package.

HIS ASSASSINATION

On Friday, Oct.21, Mr.Sivanandasundaram and about 150 persons (men, women and children) were returning home after attending a meeting convened by the Ariyalai Citizens Committee. At the Vallai junction, at about 3.30 p.m. the bus was stopped by some uniformed men (uniform similar to that worn by the



Indian Army Parachute Regiment) and all the males, including Mr. Sivanandasundaram, were ordered to alight from the bus. Thereupon two men in this uniform abused them in vulgar language. It was strange to note that these two men spoke in typical Jaffna dialect; one of them was later recognised as Banda Sangarapillai of Thondamanar, an EPRLF member. Mr.Sivanandasundaram, who identified himself and answered questions, inquired from them as to who they were. They replied that they were from the IPKF. Mr.S. wanted to speak to their Commanding Officer. He was then taken to the C.O. who was at that time at the sentry post with a pistol in one hand and a walkie-talkie in the other. The C.O., without talking a word, winked his right eye at these two persons in uniform and waved his hand signalling the passengers and the bus to proceed. As the bus proceeded along the Nelliyadi Road, as directed, it was stopped by a bicycle being thrown across the road. No sooner the bus stopped than six persons in sarong and shirt, five with pistols and the other with a rifle, came rushing towards the bus. One of them, pointing a pistol at the driver's head, ordered the driver to switch off the engine. Another who was recognised as Murali Ariyanayagam of Thondamanaru took Mr.Sivanandasundaram out of the bus. Then the bus minus Mr.S was ordered to proceed on its journey. As the bus was pulling off, the passengers saw three men pointing their guns at Mr. Sivanandasundaram's head. Then they heard the report of a gun and saw him fall to the ground face downwards. The other four gun-men were recognised by the passengers as Saravanaperumal Yogarasa, Sellakili Selvendran, Lingam of Kerudaavil - all from Thondamaanaar, and Nayinar Bhawan of Myliddy. Some of these persons were later seen in the company of IPKF soldiers at Atchuvely.

Mr.Sivanandasundaram's untimely death has caused shock, indignation and dismay among the Tamil people. His funeral took place in Point Pedro on Oct.24, attended by a large gathering of mourners.

LATE NEWS

GOATS TO THE FORE

1000 goats marched in front; and then followed the soldiers in search of the LTTE fighters, in Sri Lankan forests. The idea behind was to let the goats perish in the landmines first so that the army could march unscathed !

ANURA MEETS YOGI

It is reported that Anura Bandaranaike and Kumar Ponnambalam have met Yogi of the LTTE in Vavuniya recently seeking support of the LTTE for Sirimavo in the coming Presidential election. Details of their talks are not known.

PUBLISH AND BE KILLED

The JVP has warned newspapers not to print anything about the election. The warning came in leaflets delivered to the publishers by the JVP. But the publishers are expected to defy the warning.

LTTE CALLS FOR BOYCOTT

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, in its statement issued from Jaffna on December 14, has called on the Tamil people to boycott the forthcoming presidential election. The statement reads: "The Indian military occupation of the Tamil homeland and the continuing war, violence and anarchy are not appropriate conditions to conduct an election. Our people cannot exercise their democratic rights under the Indian military regime which has subjected the Tamils to a reign of terror and repression.

The LTTE has decided not to support any of the presidential candidates. The main presidential candidates Mrs Bandaranayake of the SLFP and Mr Premadasa of the UNP have pledged to resolve the Tamil problem. But our people are well aware that both these parties have been instrumental for the genocide of Tamils."

LAST MINUTE CAMEOS ON THE PRESIDENTIAL CONTENDERS

By our Political Analyst

MRS SIRIMAVO RATWATTE BANDARANAIKE

If political experience is to count, there is none to beat Mrs Bandaranaike's record. Sri Lanka has not had any other chief executive holding office for a total of twelve years; she was prime minister, 1960-65, 1970-77. Now at the age of 72, Mrs B seeks the executive presidency. She was exceptionally fortunate in the trusted advisers she had when serving as prime minister. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, nephew of her late husband, SWRDB, was closest to her in both her prime ministerships. In addition, she had the men with 'the golden brains' during 1970-77, the LSSP leaders, and PGB Keuneman of the Moscow CP. Their participation assured her of peace in the labour sector, a phenomenon which was at its nastiest during Mr Bandaranaike's tenure, 1956-59; these men were efficient as well.

Mrs Bandaranaike careered headlong into several domestic crises during her prime ministerships. In 1960-61, she nationalised the schools and had the Catholic Church ranged against her. In 1961, the Tamil Federal Party launched its massive Satyagraha campaign. Her party leaders, C P de Silva, Felix Dias Bandaranaike and A P Jayasuriya, had pledged to implement the B-C Pact of 1957 before the general election of July 1960. In power Mrs B violated these promises. In 1962 came the abortive coup of high-ranking military and police officers. In 1971 Mrs Bandaranaike was confronted with a major JVP insurrection which could have overturned her government. Young people felt she had gone back on her promises. Cruel measures restored normalcy.

From 1971, Mrs Bandaranaike launched her campaign of systematically removing Eelam Tamils from the public sector and the universities. Her abhorrent policies gave rise to the demand for Eelam. In her fatal misrule she had alienated Catholics, up-country Tamils (by the inhuman provisions of the Sirimavo-Shastri Pact of 1964) and the Eelam Tamils. Although the Catholics have reconciled themselves to the Lanka polity, the Eelam Tamils have taken to armed struggle.

How will Mrs Bandaranaike fare if elected Executive President? This is easy to predict. There is no Felix Dias Bandaranaike or men with 'the golden brains' or even the tried and tested ministers of her previous governments most of whom are either no longer living or have withdrawn from public life. But she will have Ronnie de Mel and at least one other senior UNP minister who will cross. There are efficient public servants but they are no substitute for skilled political leaders. De Mel and the defecting UNP-er are not adequate.

Mrs Bandaranaike will not replace the Executive Presidency, which concentrates all power in her, for the prime ministerial-cum-cabinet government that prevailed earlier. Nor will she ask the IPKF to withdraw. She will re-negotiate the Accord and expect a smaller IPKF presence to function as her policemen. She will expect this IPKF to suppress the Eelam Tamils even as she dismantles the North-East merger. India would feel safer; for Mrs B will return to the non-aligned fold.

But the catch 22 question is the JVP. The JVP will either share power with her with the deliberate intention of edging out Mrs B, or the JVP will persist in its present policies for which it may not have as much public support because Mrs B would have been legitimated by the votes of the people. **But apart from the JVP, will the UNP opposition give her the opportunity of restoring normalcy? The possibilities are that civil strife will persist and Mrs B will not be equal to the crisis that lies ahead.**

MR RANASINGHE PREMADASA

Premadasa began his political career as a member of A E Goonesinha's Labour Party. Then he joined the UNP and was in the forefront of the opposition to the B-C Pact. In a UNP rally in Kandy in 1957 Premadasa stated that if Prime Minister SWRDB saw the huge crowd, tears would flow from his eyes. The Prime Minister addressed his rally the following Saturday. SWRD government that prevailed earlier displayed rude contempt for Premadasa and 'Dudley Hamu'.

Premadasa was close to Dudley in the 1960-65 national government. Dudley placed him as junior minister to M Thiruchelvam, the FP Minister of Local Government. Thiruchelvam complained that Premadasa had been appointed with a view to exercising surveillance on him. In a quarrel in 1970-71 between Dudley and JR, Premadasa nearly emerged as the UNP's second-in-command when the Dudley camp almost succeeded in expelling JR.

Premadasa has been President-in-waiting since JR's 'ascent' to the Executive Presidency. JR never obliged; never even requesting Premadasa to be *locum tenens* whenever he left the island, until recently. JR is reported, when asked the reason for this reluctance, to have retorted that "the Queen does not appoint an acting Queen, when she leaves the United Kingdom on a foreign tour." Though 'anointed' by JR as the UNP presidential candidate, there is reason to doubt JR's acceptance of Premadasa as his successor.

What will a President Premadasa plan for his tenure of the office? Premadasa will, in the same way as Mrs B, re-negotiate the Accord and dismantle the merged North-East. But his foreign policy will not be non-alignment all the way. However, he will not be as daring as President JR. The 'Bhutanisation' of Sri Lanka has been effectively implemented by Rajiv Gandhi. Sri Lanka's foreign policy will therefore have to toe the India line.

Mr Premadasa's policy towards the Tamils will be just as harsh as that of President JR. There is no promise of a 'new deal'. Colonisation will continue, the Tamils will be discriminated against, pogromisation of Tamils by Sinhala racist bands will, if anything, be stepped up.

Mr Premadasa will therefore inherit President JR's twin problems, the JVP's threat to hijack the Sinhala state and the LTTE's deliberate programme of protracted armed struggle.

□□□□□□□□

Fearlessness

"Fearlessness connotes freedom from all external fear - fear of disease; bodily injury or death; of dispossession; of losing one's nearest and dearest; of losing reputation or giving offence; and so on".

Mahatma Gandhi

PEOPLE AND EVENTS

DEATHS

PAVALAM COOMARASWAMY, wife of the late Rev.Raju Coomarasamy and mother of Thayala Richards, Thanja Peries, Vana Eliezer and Mithran, and sister of late A.W.Rajasekaram, died on November 29, after a long illness. 36 Argyle St, Chadstone, Victoria, 3148

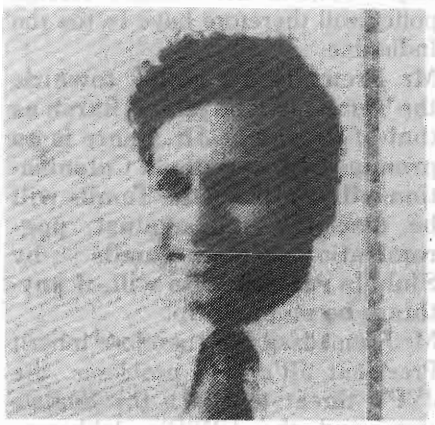
S T PILLAI (48) died 30 Nov. Born in Malaysia, he came to the UK in 1963 and rose to the rank of a Senior Executive Officer in the Export Credit Guarantee Dept. He was educated at Jaffna Hindu College and Jaffna College. He leaves behind his wife Thavamalar and four children. No.6, Mayfair Close, Ditton Rd., Surbiton.

MARRIAGES

DR.KISHOLI ANUSUYA - DR.NIMALARAJ

The marriage took place on Wednesday 30th November, 1988, at Connemara Hotel, Madras, of Dr. Nimalaraj, son of Mr & Mrs C V Thamotharam of Colombo, and Dr. Kisholi Anusuya, daughter of Mr & Mrs V M Vaikunthanathan of Madras.

PERSONAL



THIRUCHELVAM AS MONITOR

Dr.Neelan Thiruchelvam, former TULF MP and leading Human Rights activist, was one of the members of the International observer team that monitored the Plebiscite in Chile. The team was led by Dr Adolfo Suarez, former Prime Minister of Spain and Misael Pastrana, former President of Colombia. It included political leaders and constitutional experts from thirty countries. He was also a member of a similar team that monitored the recent general elections in Pakistan.

Mr B S Sinniah, Manager, Treasury Citibank, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, has been promoted as Assistant Vice-President of the Citibank. He will continue to work in Sydney. He is a son of Mr & Mrs B R R Sinniah of Chavakachcheri.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

7.1.1989 - New Moon Day
11.1.1989 - Sathurthi
13.1.1989 - Shasti Viratham
14.1.1989 - Thai Pongal
16.1.1989 - Kaarthigai Viratham
21.1.1989 - Full Moon Day
22.1.1989 - Thaippoosam

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

TAMIL ISSUES

A general meeting of the International Communist Party, East Ham Branch, London E.6, will be held on December 20, at Manor Park Library, Romford Road, Manor Park E.12, to discuss the problems and difficulties experienced by the oppressed Tamils of Sri Lanka. Time - 7.30 pm : Tube - East Ham

'SLEEPING BEAUTY'

A dance drama presented by VIJAYAMBIKAI INDRAKUMAR - Date Jan 7, 1989 : Place, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan : Time 6.30 pm

TWO TAMIL DRAMAS

Two Tamil plays will be staged at East Ham Town Hall, London E6, on Saturday, Jan.14, 1989 (Pongal Day) at 7.15 p.m. by Tamil Performing Arts Society. The first play "YUGATHARMAM" is a translation of 'The Exception And The Rule' by the great German playwright Bertolt Brecht. The second play "SAMPANTHAM" is an adaptation of world-famous Russian playwright Anton Checkov's 'The Proposal'.

DINNER AND DISCO

January 21 Vembadi OGA (UK) - Dinner and Disco 7 pm Lola Jones Hall, Tooting. For tickets and further information contact Dr.Meena Mahendra (President) 01-560.1569, Mrs.Pathma Perinpanayagam (Secretary) 0474-361600 or Mrs Umaiyal Suriyakumaran (Treasurer) 01-949 4234.

MEDICAL INSTITUTE OF TAMILS

In March 1988, a group of Tamil Doctors met in East London to consider the concept of a Medical Institute for Tamils and it has led to the formation of a representative Steering Committee led by Dr S Pasupathyrajah.

The increasing health needs of the Tamil Community, especially the refugees, are being evaluated for appropriate action. The ever-spiralling health needs in the Tamil homelands of Sri Lanka are being assessed through medical personnel serving in the North and East of Sri Lanka. Interested Doctors and Dentists are urged to contact: Dr R Jayaratnam, 56 Tryfan Close, Redbridge, Ilford, Essex. (Tel.01-551 3411)

PRINCIPAL APPEALS

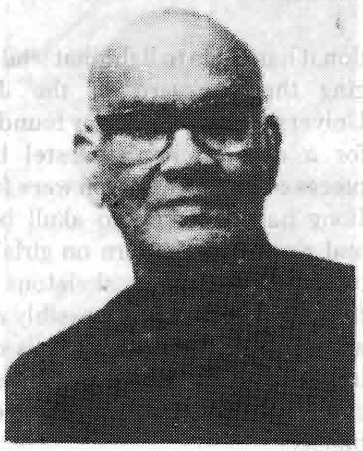
Dr E S Thevasagayam, Principal, St.John's College, Jaffna, and his wife Mrs Daisy Thevasagayam were entertained to tea by past pupils of the College on Sunday, 4th December, at Putney Church Hall.

Dr Thevasagayam referred to the current situation in Jaffna. During the October 1987 Indian offensive, 30 shells fell within the school premises and 10 of them scored direct hits. Valuable lab equipment was destroyed and several buildings damaged. He outlined a 5-year plan estimated to cost Rs.7,000,000 and appealed to past pupils for generous donations. Old pupils are urged to contact Mr C Sathiyamoorthy (Tel. 024541-5692) or Mr Mahen Sebaratnam (Tel. 0727-59614) or Mr S Sivasubramaniam (Tel. 0702-524661).

W L T S COMPUTER CENTRE

Mr.Michael Meacher, MP, formally opened the new Computer Centre of the West London Tamil School on 10th December. The Centre is located at Station House (3rd Floor), 1 Harrow Road, Wembley. Its funding has come from the E E C as well as Brent Borough Council. Admission is open to all, young and old. Tuition is free. For further details, please ring 01-900 0826.

TAMILS ABROAD



Somasundaram Sabapathipillai
(born December 27, 1910)

A rolling stone gathers no moss but Mr Sabapathipillai is an exception. In 10 years he had passed through the portals of no less than six schools but he certainly does not appear to have been the worse for being uprooted so often! He passed the Cambridge Senior exam with honours and distinctions in 1926, the London Inter Arts the following year, and two years later, at the age of 19, the London B.A in Mathematics, Parts I and II, with Honours. His academic successes did not end there for he soon proceeded to London and at 21 he was awarded the M.A degree in Astronomy on the strength of which he was made a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society. He nearly entered the Ceylon Civil Service but for an unfortunate brush with Principal Robert Marrs during his short spell at the Ceylon University College. Though a career in the powerful and prestigious Civil Service was the ambition of many a talented young man of that era, if not, at least of their parents, Mr Sabapathipillai took this rebuff with equanimity, qualified as a barrister and was making his way up in the legal profession where he would certainly have held high judicial office but for his involvement first in Federal Party politics and later in things of the spirit. It is in this latter field he has made his most significant contribution to the Tamil community.

He came to live in the UK 23 years ago and taught Mathematics in London at secondary level for a while. He soon discovered that there was a void in the social and religious life of the growing Sri Lankan Tamil Hindu community here. It is a well-known fact that in the late 60's and early 70's there was no one available to solemnize marriages or to officiate at funerals according to orthodox Hindu rites and customs. Having obtained 'Nirvana Theedchai' which enabled him to perform poojas like a brahmin and having won the love and respect of his people with his active involvement in organizations such as the Hindu Association of Great Britain, the Federation of Hindu Organizations in the UK, and, since 1974, the Britannia Hindu Temple Trust of which he is the founder and continues to be the moving spirit, he now occupies a unique position as the leader of British Saivites.

His biggest contribution and one which will last for ever is the Highgate Murugan Temple at Archway in North London. It has taken 10 years to build and has already cost £400,000. It would be no exaggeration to say that Mr Sabapathipillai's religious fervour, self-sacrifice and single-minded dedication have in no small way contributed to the creation of a centre for prayer and worship, social and cultural activities for the large Tamil Hindu Community resident not only in London but also in the Home Countries. It should be remembered that in the initial stages of fund-raising, in particular for the purchase of the site, a substantial part of the money needed came from the 'fees' paid for conducting marriages, funerals and special family occasions which Mr Sabapathipillai most willingly and generously donated to the Murugan Temple Trust.

Despite his failing health he has manfully carried on the role of 'friend, philosopher and guide' to hundreds of Tamil people in Britain and in this task he has been ably assisted by his wife Maheswary, herself a devout Hindu and well-read in Tamil and the scriptures. Theirs has been a long and successful partnership - they married in Nallur in 1939 - and we wish them many more years of useful service in the cause of the preservation of the Tamil way of life.

THAMBY'S BIRTHDAY

The birthday of Prabaharan, LTTE leader, which fell on 26.11.88, was celebrated in Tamil Nadu and in Sri Lanka's North and East. Prominent Tamil leaders addressing meetings wished him success and long life. Several people donated blood at centres specially opened for this purpose. Special poojas and celebrations were also held in temples in New York, UK and other parts of the world.

Season's Greetings

In this season of peace and goodwill
We remember the plight of our sisters and brothers in Sri Lanka.
We pray that their sufferings will soon come to an end.
That our struggle will succeed.
And that justice and harmony will prevail.

EELAM NEWS

COMPLAINTS OF TORTURE

The following are excerpts from a letter dated 15th October addressed by the *Thirukkonamalai Annaiyar Munnani* to Col.Sivaji Patel of IPKF, Trincomalee, with copies to President Jayewardene, Mr.Rajiv Gandhi and the Indian High Commissioner:

We appreciate the fact that as assured to us Mr.Jeevaraja was released. However, we wish to place on record that Mr.Jeevaraja was subjected to assault and torture inside the Railway detention camp on the same day of his being brought to the camp on the pretext that the Major-in-charge of the camp at St.Joseph's College wanted to speak to him.

On arrival at the Railway camp the Commanding Officer, Lt.Col.P.C. Vashishi, questioned Mr.Jeevaraja whether he possessed an LTTE seal, which he denied and thereafter was informed that he would be arrested. Mr.Jeevaraja was tortured within a few hours of his arrest. He was questioned in Tamil by persons speaking the language but hostile to the LTTE, and the questions put to Mr.Jeevaraja by these persons were not confined to the LTTE seal but were connected with the activities of our Front.

It is surprising that Mr.Jeevaraja who is conversant with English could not hear the voice of any officer of the IPKF during the time of torture and interrogation. His eyes were blindfolded before he was taken to the place of torture. His hands were tied behind his back and tied to a chair on which he was asked to sit at the commencement of questioning. Later he was asked to stand up and his clothes were removed while his legs were tied together. Thereafter he was asked questions and beaten up, forcing his admission on these questions. He was made to sit on the floor, beaten up again and lifted upside down and his body immersed in water up to the waist and questioned and assaulted. This process was repeated several times. Electric current was passed several times through Mr.Jeevaraja's body while he was kept upside down, and he sustained head injury and abrasion.

These facts strengthened our earlier complaints to you that unauthorised persons are given a free hand to deal with suspects taken in for questioning by the IPKF in the most inhuman manner to pursue their political objective.

CABINET FOR EELAM

A five member cabinet headed by the EPRLF leader Varatharaja Perumal was sworn in on 5th December as the first government of the north-eastern provincial council, according to a report from Trincomalee. The question in the minds of Tamils is for how long this cabinet and the council could survive and how many further Tamil lives are necessary to be sacrificed before the Tamils could have their choice.

PATHMANABHA'S CASE MAY BE WITHDRAWN ?

There are indications that the Government is considering withdrawing the criminal action filed against Mr.Pathmanabha and 15 others, according to reports received from Sri Lanka, so that Pathmanabha could involve himself in politics.

It is learnt that one of the leaders of the EPRLF (whose name has not been disclosed) has had discussions with the Indian High Commissioner, Mr.J N Dixit in Colombo, regarding assumption of office in the N-E Provincial Council by Pathmanabha.

MILITARY GOVERNOR FOR NORTH & EAST

Lt Gen Nalin Senaratne, who was once in charge of Jaffna military operations has been appointed Governor of the North-Eastern Province. The appointment of an army commander who was sent to crush the aspirations of the Tamil people as their Governor has caused serious concern among the Tamils. The governor is the chief executive and his actions cannot be challenged in any court of law under the Provincial Councils Act.

HUMAN SKELETONS FOUND IN UNIVERSITY COMPOUND

According to news reaching London,it has come to light that while digging the backyard of the Jaffna University premises to lay foundation for a new Women's Hostel block, pieces of human skeleton were found. Long hair attached to skull bones, and rings usually worn on girls' toes indicated that these skeletons were those of females, and possibly about an year old. Rags of women's clothing, a false-leg, and a girl's identity card too were found in the nearby bushes.

'AIDS' TESTING APPARATUS FOR JAFFNA HOSPITAL

The World Health Orgainsation (WHO) has undertaken to donate a modern equipment to the Jaffna General Hospital for testing suspected 'Aids' patients. This equipment is to be housed in the Blood Bank Building of the hospital to enable blood from donors to be tested for Aids virus. Two officials of the WHO have arrived in Jaffna and are currently inspecting the Blood Bank along with the respective local officials of the hospital.

NEW EQUIPMENT TO REPLACE THE DAMAGED

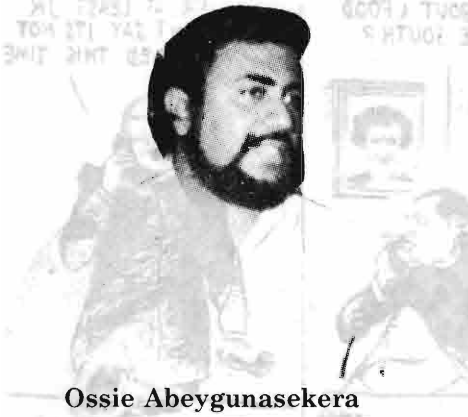
The Overseas Development Assistance has offered to supply new equipment worth Rupees twenty-five lakhs to the Jaffna University to replace those damaged by the Indian army in their battle with the LTTE last year. They will be issued through the Ministry of Rehabilitation of Sri Lanka. It will be recalled that a major portion of the equipment in the Science, Medical and Arts laboratories was damaged, and 90% of the Computers were destroyed during the fight.

IPKF AND SRI LANKAN ARMY CLASH

A gun battle was reported near Trincomalee, on Dec 13, between the IPKF and Sri Lankan army. According to reports from Colombo, Sri Lankan soldiers are said to have opened fire on members of the EPRLF who attacked their camp and fled to the nearby Indian Army base. Five EPRLF members and one Indian soldier are said to have been killed.

SRI LANKAN NEWS

OSSIE SURVIVES



Ossie Abeygunasekera

The SLMP presidential candidate, Ossie Abeygunasekera, survived an assassination attempt by JVP gunmen on December 2, according to sources close to the SLMP. The SLMP vice-president Devabandara Senaratne was killed in the attack. This is the second attempt on the life of the socialist candidate during the last two weeks.

SINHALESE EXODUS !

When the Tamils of Sri Lanka left the shores of Sri Lanka, fleeing from the brutal atrocities of the Sinhalese army, and sought refuge in India and other western countries, the Security Minister referred to such unfortunate Tamils as "economic refugees", little knowing that his own government itself would create a situation forcing his Sinhalese brethren and sisters to seek refuge outside Lanka.

Western Embassies of Britain, Germany, France, Canada and USA in Sri Lanka are reportedly inundated with visa applications from wealthy Sinhalese as well as educated youths. Airlines have sold all outward-bound tickets from mid-December to late January 1989, and may not be able to cope with the demand unless the escalating violence shows a downward trend.

RONNIE COMPLAINS OF ASSASSINATION PLOT

Former Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel has complained to the police that two persons, including a close associate of a leading politician have planned to assassinate him. It is learnt that he has named the two persons and requested the police to take necessary action.

IPKF FOR THE SOUTH AS WELL ?

"The inability of the Sri Lankan armed forces to contain the mounting unrest and anti-governmental violence in the South of Sri Lanka may force the IPKF to intervene in the Sinhala dominated areas to maintain law and order", the Indian Prime Minister is said to have commented at a recent press interview in New Delhi, according to *New Life* of December 2.

INDIA DEMANDS PROTECTION FOR ITS NATIONALS

A press release said that the High Commission of India in Sri Lanka has requested the Sri Lankan government to provide adequate security for Indian nationals working in different projects and schemes in various parts of the island. The Indian High Commission condemned the killings of three Indian nationals working at a sugar factory project in the Moneragala district on Nov.23.

NO "DEMOCRATIC PATH" FOR ROHANA

In a most revealing letter to the Sunday Times in Sri Lanka, JVP leader Rohana Wijeweera has stated that he no longer believes in a democratic path to finding solutions to the problems in Sri Lanka.

"The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna should be, and will be, appointed to power by the patriotic people led by the poor people. The members of our party are willing to sacrifice their lives for their country and people.

"When our members are willing to lead the people at the risk of torture and death, the people will have to make at least a small sacrifice to liberate the country and its people, and to win their rights", the JVP leader is said to have stated.

He has also made clear that there is no longer any chance of his movement joining the political mainstream. This has virtually put an end to speculation that he may accept offers of a role in an opposition coalition led by Mrs.Bandaranaike or take up a more recent offer of a place in a caretaker Government by President Jayewardene.

He added that he "does not have the slightest faith in President Jayewardene." He is also equally critical of Mrs.Bandaranaike. Of the SLFP, he says "They have no real solution to the country's problems. In the face of the present problems and people's struggle, they have already been written off. Though they talk of dividing up portfolios, what have they done for the rights of the people?"

The JVP leader suggests that "if the classes that exploit the poor, who are a minority, hand over state power to the proletariat, which is in the majority, peacefully, we of the proletariat are willing to accept it peacefully. But history shows that instead of handing over power, they try to remain in power by force, using violence. In such instances, the poor classes have to make a valid response."

GENERAL ELECTION IN FEBRUARY

President Jayewardene has announced that Parliament would be dissolved on December 20, General Election would be held on Wednesday, the 15th February 1989 and the new Parliament would be convened on March 19.

BRITONS LEAVE LANKA

British employees were preparing on Friday to leave a sugar factory in South-Eastern Sri Lanka after suspected Marxist rebels killed three Indians on a nearby plantation, according to a Reuter report. It was not immediately known where the Britons would go.

RED ARMY TO FIGHT 'THE REDS'

A new underground death squad is being blamed for a death toll for Sunday night and early Monday of 67, making it the highest total for a 24-hour period in the campaign. Analysts in Colombo say a new death squad - the so-called People's Revolutionary Red Army - is responsible for many of the latest killings in the south and central areas of the island. Independent observers are convinced the new death squads must be linked in some way to the security forces. They say that the Red Army's activities have been marked by unusual professionalism and discipline, and that although most of the killings have taken place during curfew hours, no suspect has been arrested. Some believe the Red Army has been organised by the Government to hit back at its political opponents and are linking it with the police commando unit known as the Special Task Force. This elite group was trained by British mercenaries in the early 1980s and helped to subdue the Tamil Tiger separatist guerrillas in Eastern province before Indian troops arrived last year. *('The Times' - Dec.14, 1988)*

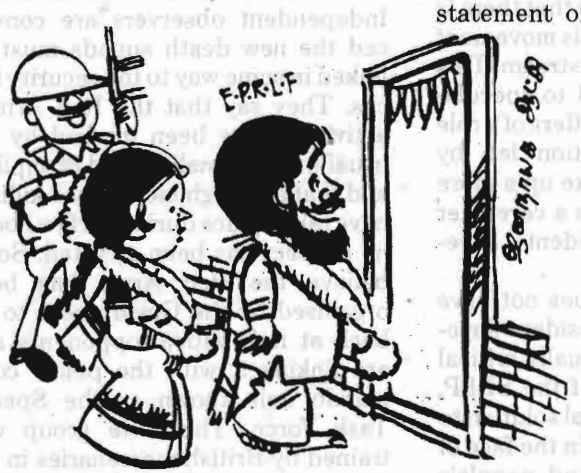
IPKF PERFORMS MIRACLE

The world has been led to believe that a miracle has been performed by the IPKF in war-ravaged Tamil Eelam. The Governments of New Delhi and Colombo have propagated the myth that the Tamils have secured their demands for an autonomous region with the installation of the EPRLF-dominated regime in Trincomalee.

We publish below a few comments on the recently held Provincial Council elections in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka which have appeared in the Sri Lanka press. We leave it to our readers to judge for themselves whether the outcome of the poll was "an unmitigated success" as claimed by Lt.Gen.Kalkat, or a victory "for peace and democracy" as Foreign Minister Narasimha Rao told the Lok Sabha, or just a matter of 'the mountain labouring and bringing forth a mouse'. (Editor)

NORTH-EAST POLL NOT CONDUCTED PROPERLY - S P O

High ranking administrative officers who were on election duty during the recently concluded North-East Provincial Council election, have submitted their reports on the conduct of the election to the Commissioner of Elections. The Commissioner will base his Report to Parliament on the information contained in the reports he has received from Senior Presiding Officers.



According to the report from Batticaloa, a large number of ballot papers were found along with their counterfoils in the ballot boxes. The polling centres were extremely short-staffed and Sri Lankan soldiers were airlifted to Batticaloa to act as Senior Presiding Officers. As a result, the marking of the register of electors, the application of indelible ink and other prescribed procedures were not observed in many polling centres. **At one centre, armed members of the EPRLF forcibly removed ballot papers from the custody of the Senior Presiding Officer and after forcing the public outside the polling centre to mark them, put them into the ballot boxes.** This resulted in election officials finding a number of ballot papers with the counterfoils still attached to them. Voting, which was scheduled to have begun at 7 a.m., did not begin in some areas until about 11 a.m., while in other areas voting did not stop as scheduled at 4 p.m., as the EPRLF, insisted on the polling centres being kept open until almost 7 p.m.

SPOs complained that there was nothing much they could have done in the circumstances as the shortage of staff permitted any person to walk in and collect as many ballot papers as he wanted. This explained why the statement of ballot papers did not balance with the tally of counterfoils in nine out of ten instances. There were two instances, he added, when the number of ballot papers in the boxes exceeded the number of registered electors in the area. He added that in some polling centres the SPOs' Journal and other documents, ink applicators, scissors and sealers were forcibly removed. *(The Sunday Times (Colombo) of Dec.4, 1988)*

HEADS TO ROLL

The Brahmins of New Delhi have apparently decreedthat the northern and eastern provinces of Sri Lankashould have a coalition government. It is reported that the all India Radio, New Delhi's mouthpiece, had made this announcement and following this magisterial decree from the Indian overlords their satraps in Colombo's India House had requested the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress to form a coalition government with the EPRLF which tied with the SLMC at the eastern elections held last week.

This Indian intervention in Sri Lanka's affairs must be read against the backdrop of the elections held last week. They were held without the participation and in fact in the teeth of resistance by the LTTE, the most powerful of the northern Tamil terrorist groups. The EPRLF, whose connections with India are well known, and the SLMC have tied for power in the eastern province.

As if all this was not enough to render the elections suspicious, India now decrees that the EPRLF and the SLMC must be buddy buddies and form a coalition government under Big Brother's auspices. These avuncular Indian interventions made through the agency of Mr.Dixit take on a sinister guise in the light of the whole scenario in the north and the east. Who is India to decree that two parties which have been elected

continued on page 19

COLOMBO ACCUSED OF AIDING DEATH SQUADS

Derek Brown in Colombo

Newly formed human rights groups in Sri Lanka have accused the government of using new emergency powers to set up death squads.

The Colombo District Citizens' Committee claims that at least 1,000 people have disappeared without trace this year. The committee says abductions and killings have increased dramatically since new powers were introduced on November 9. This has outraged the Sinhalese Buddhist majority, which lays great store by family funerals. "The more dangerous human rights aspect of it is that people are being rounded up at night and killed, and their bodies disposed of", said the Committee's president, Mr.Prins Gunasekara. The new legislation allows junior police officers, or anyone authorised by them, to dispose bodies without inquest.

Some of the murders, the committee acknowledges, could have been committed by criminals, or by the increasingly merciless Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) bands of armed Sinhalese militants. But most, the committee members insist, were the work of soldiers, police, Special Task Force paramilitary units, or members of the so-called 'Green Tigers', a name applied to any armed supporter of the ruling UNP. **"But our point is that the JVP killings are heavily publicised, while these state killings are not. And if the state descends to the level of the subversives, something is really wrong", said the Committee's Treasurer, Dr. Hema Gunatilleke.**

The government claims that nearly all the killings in the south - at least 1,000 this year are officially admitted - were the work of the JVP and its associates, who are committed to violent Marxist revolution.

In its campaign against the government, and in protest against presidential elections due on December 19, the JVP has indeed paralysed and terrorised large areas of the south, with strikes enforced by intimidation, destruction of power lines, and widespread disruption of transport and government services. The official death toll is growing by 15 to 20 every day.*(Courtesy: The Guardian, November 29, 1988)*

IPKF Performs Miracle

continued from page 18

through the votes of Sri Lankans should form a coalition administration? It is clear that this initial Indian sortie is a form of dangerous kite-flying.

No Sri Lankan, we are sure, will like the northern and eastern provinces of this country to be an Indian backyard. It has to be remembered that the Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Agreement under which the North-East Provincial Council has been formed is at the heart of the Presidential Election debate today. Both the UNP and SLFP candidates want the agreement abrogated. Even the SLMP candidate, who is supportive of the agreement and the Provincial Councils, is opposed to the Indian presence. In such a context, with the country in turmoil and the Presidential Election due in under a month, not even the most foolhardy supporter of the agreement will think that things will be frozen in perpetuity in their present state.

This is why we have said repeatedly that the whole question of devolution and Provincial Councils are something to be decided by the people of Sri Lanka at an election. The forthcoming Presidential Election can act as a Referendum for this purpose. What will happen in a month's time vis-a-vis the Provincial Councils not even the soothsayers will be ready to say. The least India can do until then is to hold its tongue.

This recent attempt of interference in Sri Lankan affairs by Indian diplomats stationed here cannot be ignored. Many such occurrences have taken place in recent times. As a sovereign and independent country this blatant interference in Sri Lanka's internal affairs has to be taken up at the highest levels in New Delhi: Heads got to roll. *(The Island (Editorial) - Nov.27, 1988)*

AN EVENING OF MUSIC AND DANCE

Review by Vasan

The Cultural Committee of The World Federation of Tamils presented its first programme of music and dance at the Hammersmith Town Hall in West London on Sunday, Nov.13, 1988. The events commenced at 6 p.m. with an invocation to Goddess Sakthi by Mathini Sriskandarajah. A song Thamizh Vaazhthu was sung by Mathini Sriskandarajah and Mr.S.Mohanarajah. Another song Eela Vaazhthu was also rendered by Mr.Mohanarajah.

The second item was the 'Pancha Veena' - playing of five Veenas - by the London Veena Group under the direction of Arunthathy Sriskandarajah. The other performers were Deepa Ragunathan, Selvi Kanaganayagam, Kavitha Gowripalan and Vidhya Vinayagamoorthy. The accompaniments were provided by Mr.S.Sivarajah on the Miruthangam, and Mr.T.Sithambaram on the Morsing, and the Kenjira.

The third event was the group singing, or Goshti Gaanam, by Sakintha Kumarasamy, Vasugi Thuraisingam, Menaka Thanendran, Vijayaluxmi Mahendran, S.Vaseeharan and M.Jegathasan. Mrs.Ambika Thamotharam produced and co-ordinated it. The theme of the songs referred to the culture-bound city of Yaalpaanam with its ever reverberating drums and the peeling bell from the temple of Nalloor Murugan, the singing fish of Batticaloa eulogised by the late Swami Vipulanantha, himself an illustrious son of Batticaloa, the ancient and time immemorial blessed cities of Thirukonamalai with its famous Koneswaran Temple worshipped by the great king Lankeswaran, Thiruketheeswaran worshipped by 'Kethu'.

The next item was the Bharatha Natyam performed by two talented artistes, Kanchana Shivalingam and Chitra Satkunanathan.

The last item for the night was a 'Kuchchupudi' dance by Kamini Kalidasa who has mastered the techniques of this dance which originated in the village of Kuchchupudi in Andhra Pradesh, South India. The highlight of her performance was the 'Krishna-Leela' dance in Kaambothi raaga, with Aathi thaalam, performed to a 16th century composition, the dancer carrying small trays with lit lamps in both hands and also a small pot (Chembu) of water with a lit lamp in it placed on her head. She performed the final dance on the top of a large pot kept upside down, with the same items in her hands and head. This dance needed absolute concentration and Kamini did it excellently.

The programme as a whole was well directed and co-ordinated. The compere was Dr.Nirmalaraj Thamotharam who is also a student of music.

The Tamils have preserved their culture from time immemorial against natural disasters like the great deluge of the Lemoria continent where the first Tamil Sangam was held many thousands of years ago, as well as man-made disasters like the one that is happening today in Eelam. Tamils have taken their culture and their traditions to the countries of migration.

It is hoped that the Cultural Committee of The World Federation of Tamils will arrange similar programmes in the future not only in London but also in other parts of the world.